

Lab 5: Flower Garden Design

Flower gardens are to vegetable gardens like a corvette is to a pickup truck. The first is esthetically pleasing but impractical, and relatively expensive. The second need not be fancy - it has a job to do. Nonetheless, most gardeners eventually try their hand at flower gardening, and many are surprised to find that it is much more challenging than a vegetable patch.

In the first place, many of the most popular flowering plants are perennials, and thus represent a larger investment in time and money than a tomato transplant. If the tomato doesn't work out, the vegetable gardener can always plant another type next summer. In contrast, it might take a decade for a peony to reach full maturity, and some varieties can cost hundreds of dollars per plant, so mistakes are costly. In this assignment you will plan a flower border. This can be a strip alongside a walkway, property boundary, fence, or building. Using a sheet of graph paper (provided in lab) outline the dimensions of your plot. Use a scale that causes the layout map to fill the page.



Paeonia suffruticosa Kao

Now you need to decide which plants you would like to grow. For the purposes of this exercise, each student has a budget of \$200.00. Using the information in text Chapter 9, the garden catalogs and reference texts, plan your garden. For each plant, you need to report why you decided to grow this plant, the cultivar you will use, the mode of propagation, climate zone compatibility, flower time, flower color, and estimated years to maturity. For each plant, you should also report any special care you will need to take, including training vines, improving the soil, planting bulbs in the fall, or overwintering some plants indoors.

At the end of the lab period, compare your plan with the plans of others. Which plants were popular? Which were unusual? Did everyone stay within budget? Did you get any good ideas from other students' design ideas?

Assignment (due 28 Feb): Hand in your garden layout, a budget sheet, a list of probable future needs and a one paragraph plan for each type of plant. Write a short (one page essay detailing your plans for this hypothetical garden. How much time do you think it will take during the growing season? How do you plan to prepare the soil? Will you have any help on this project?

Begonia Mardi Gras

Some begonia cultivars can cost up to \$100. for a single tuber.

